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The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Fellowships in the United Nations system" (JIU/REP/98/1).

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FELLOWSHIPS
IN
THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

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ACRONYMS

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
ATCT	*Agence Tunisienne de Coopération Technique*, Tunisia
BRITISH C.	The British Council, Manchester, UK
CBIE	Canadian Bureau for International Education, Ottawa, Canada
CCAQ	Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions
CCPOQ	Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions
CDG	Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft e.v, Köln, Germany
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIES	*Centre International des Etudiants Stagiaires*, Paris, France
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IAPSO	Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILO/ITC	International Labour Organization/International Training Centre, Turin
IMO	International Maritime Organization
INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
NEX	National Execution
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPSA	National Placement and Supervising Agency
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SFO	Senior Fellowship Officers
TCDC	Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries
UNDCP	United Nations International Drug Control Programme
UNDDSMS	United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services
UNDESA	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNETPSA	United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNU	United Nations University
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WHO/AFRO	World Health Organization/Regional Office for Africa
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OBJECTIVE, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE:

To identify major management and coordination issues relating to the implementation of United Nations System fellowship programmes and the contribution of these programmes to capacity building.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS :

After an overview of United Nations system fellowships programmes, the Inspectors came to the conclusion that Agencies should adopt a uniform format on reporting based on a common definition of fellowships which focuses on quality, relevance and impact; While the contribution of fellowships to capacity building was difficult to assess as acknowledged by previous evaluations, measures to foster the use of former fellows' expertise were called for.

RECOMMENDATION No. 1

(a) Definition of fellowship: A fellowship in the United Nations system is a specially tailored or selected training activity that provides a monetary grant to a qualified individual or group of qualified individuals for the purpose of fulfilling special learning objectives; such training which may be of short or long duration and may take place in an appropriate training institution or in the field inside or outside the fellow's country, should be in response to nationally-approved human resources policies and plans and should aim at impact and relevance for all stakeholders involved;

(b) for reporting purposes, participants to seminars, workshops, technical meetings or conferences should not be classified as "fellows" unless a case can be made that attendance to such training activities form an integral part of a fellowship programme as defined under a); fellowships entailing payment of a stipend or a daily subsistence allowance(type I) should be reported separately from those awarded under other arrangements (type II);

(c) United Nations system organizations and IAPSO should adopt a uniform format of reporting on fellowships based on an agreed definition and providing reliable data which better reflect the trends in fellowship programmes and in particular the efforts made in compliance with mandates on national execution, gender perspective and TCDC;

(d) To stress the excellence attached to United Nations system sponsored fellowship programmes, consideration should be given within the inter-agency coordination mechanism on fellowships to establishing common standards to be used by each organization for delivering a certificate of excellence to training institutions and meritorious trainees;

(e) United Nations system organizations should maintain and/or update data banks of local or regional expertise taking into account the contribution made by their fellowship programmes; to foster an increased use of such expertise, access to these data banks should be widely open and providers of services to the United Nations system should be encouraged to avail themselves of that expertise.

RECOMMENDATION No. 2

(a) The Secretary General, in consultation with the Administrator of UNDP and with Member States concerned, should submit to the General Assembly at its 54th session, an evaluation report on the implementation of resolution 50/131 of 20 December 1995 and on the need to maintain UNETPSA as a separate Programme with an expanded geographical coverage;

(b) The Secretary General should submit to the General Assembly at its 54th session a report on the training and fellowship programmes carried out by different units in the secretariat and make proposals in view to enhance their implementation and promote better coordination;

(c) INSTRAW should review its fellowships funding policies so as to be able to initiate and sustain a fellowship programme relevant with its mandate.

Concerning the management of fellowship programmes, the findings established *inter alia* that implementation was often perceived as an issue of agency execution versus government execution whereas any of these two modalities allowed implementation arrangements involving both governments and United Nations agencies; it was also recognized that evaluation remained the Achilles's heel of most fellowship programmes.

RECOMMENDATION No. 3

(a) To support national execution, Organizations should establish data banks of training institutions in their particular field of activities and make them accessible to national administrations involved in the implementation of fellowships either upon request or online;

(b) fees negotiated with host institutions by United Nations system organizations should be considered as "UN rates" applicable to all System sponsored fellows irrespective of modality of execution;

(c) fellows under NEX should be insured within collective insurance contracts entered into by United Nations system organizations;

(d) where training takes place abroad, disparities in allowances to trainees placed in the same institution should not exist or should be kept to a minimum, whatever the organization concerned or the modality used for execution;

(e) for countries facing problems of transfer of funds and which are involved in national execution of fellowship programmes, arrangements should be made through the Resident Coordinator system to guaranty payment of fees to host institutions and allowances to fellows;

(f) When using the facilities offered under support cost arrangements for UNDP supported projects, nominating countries involved in national execution of fellowship programmes are urged to take full advantage of the experience and network of contacts of United Nations system organizations in their respective fields of competence;

RECOMMENDATION No. 4

(a) Host governments are urged to provide or continue to provide the necessary support to their NPSAs so that they can extend free services to United Nations system- sponsored fellows; as a matter of policy, organizations should give priority to securing such free services whenever available, due regard being given to cost-effectiveness and quality control;

(b) Future SFO Meetings should investigate other possibilities for more cost-effective placements such as regrouping requests to fewer NPSAs, requesting a particular NPSA to serve as a regional placement agency, pooling of resources or establishment on a cost-sharing basis of common placement structures funded by participating organizations...etc.

(c) The Secretary General, in consultation with the Administrator of UNDP and the host country, should report to the General Assembly at its 54th session on the possibility of UNETPSA being given a new mandate to capitalise on its experience and serve as a common system placement and supervising mechanism in Southern Africa.

RECOMMENDATION N. 5

(a) Organizations which have not done so should undertake on their own or within a joint exercise with other interested organizations an evaluation of their fellowship programme and report consequently to their legislative organs on ways and means to improve their overall impact, relevance and cost-effectiveness;

(b) Recipient countries are urged to contribute to the fullest extent possible to the implementation of follow up procedures which can enhance the evaluation of fellowship programmes;

(c) Within the framework of inter-agency coordination on fellowships, evaluation issues and methodologies should be emphasized through sharing of experiences and definition of best practices;

Coordination was among the issues covered in the 1976 JIU report which recommended to set up an inter-agency coordination mechanism. Since then much progress has been achieved. Even though some consider that fellowships are now one of the most coordinated areas in the United Nations system, the need for maintaining such a mechanism is still valid. Better coordination is also called for at field level and within organizations themselves.

RECOMMENDATION No. 6

(a) An inter-agency coordination mechanism on fellowship matters should be maintained and hosted by one of the participating organizations to handle focal point activities; in designating the host organization, due consideration should be given to the need for continuity and to the special responsibilities of the United Nations in coordination issues;

(b) SFO Meetings should continue to serve as the main framework for inter-agency coordination on system wide issues relating to the management of fellowships, with adequate linkage to the ACC machinery; participation to these Meetings and their format should better reflect the increasing trend in the placement of fellows in developing countries;prior to SFO meetings, consideration should be given to the assessment of fellowships at regional level in view to take full advantage of possibilities offered for the regionalisation of placements and in the context of TCDC.

(c) Agencies which have training activities in the same fields should designate a lead agency and harmonise their programmes for better impact and to avoid duplications:

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

1. This report has been prepared in response to a request from the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ), a subsidiary body of ACC, which noted that discussions at the eleventh biennial Meeting of Senior Fellowship Officers of the United Nations system (Paris 21-23 September 1994) reflected system wide concerns on a number of issues regarding *inter alia* the impact of the move to national execution of projects, the evolving role of the United Nations system in capacity building and fellowships administration, the cost effectiveness of related management structures, the harmonization of definitions of fellowships and related statistical reporting, etc..

2. CCPOQ considered therefore that further inter-agency scrutiny was required and that the Joint Inspection Unit could draw comparison with a previous report on the subject issued by the Unit in 1996[1] and submit a new report focusing in particular on the following objectives:

- *identification of the contribution made by United Nations system fellowships to capacity building*
- *determination of the optimal modality for fellowship administration and the United Nations system role therein;*
- *streamlining and possible centralization of certain management structures for fellowships administration ;*
- *development of common terminology and Categories for fellowships to facilitate integrated and comparable reporting ;*
- *identification of appropriate United Nations system co-ordinating mechanisms;*

3. The 1976 JIU report was fairly exhaustive and contained fifty specific and action oriented recommendations covering the following aspects: planning and programming of fellowships; language problems; types and duration of fellowships; placement; fellow's problems in the host country; evaluation and follow-up; organizational structures of offices responsible for fellowships; administering agencies; decentralization of responsibility for fellowships; inter-secretariat coordination; monetary value of fellowships awards. While the focus of the current report is somehow different, many of the above issues are still a matter of concern today. It is therefore useful to assess, where and when appropriate, the extent to which recommendations made more than twenty years ago by the JIU have been implemented or are still pertinent today.

4. The request from CCPOQ for a fresh scrutiny of fellowship programmes reflects new trends in technical cooperation in the late 80's and the 90's which have stressed that " recipient governments have the sole responsibility for the co-ordination of external assistance and the principal responsibility for its design and management"[2] and that "in order to attain the goal of self-reliance in developing countries through the strengthening of national capacities, the operational activities of the United Nations system should emphasize the human dimension of development, in particular through education, training and the development of human resources".[3] "National capacity Building", "institution strengthening", "national execution of projects" thus became important considerations for Member states and legislative organs increasingly concerned with issues of sustainable development and the relevance and cost-effectiveness of operational activities.

B. Methodology

5. To assess the importance of United Nations system fellowship programmes, an attempt was made to get for each organization reliable data on the number of fellows with gender distribution, number of man/months

and total expenditures, all inputted on the basis of the three categories of sources of funding (UNDP, Regular Budget and Other sources). IAPSO published annual statistical reports for 1990 to 1995 complemented by more detailed data in electronic format for 1994 and 1995 were made available. Participating organizations were also requested similar data for cross- reference.

6. The views of officials in charge of fellowship programmes were also sought. Since 1974, periodic Senior Fellowship Officers (SFO) meetings of the United Nations system have been held to deal with different issues and have contributed to achieve a large degree of harmonization in respect of nomination forms, travel, payment instructions, stipend rates...etc. The last such Meeting was held in April 1997 in Vienna and gave to the JIU an opportunity to share with participants the proposed methodology for the conduct of this evaluation. The debates, conclusions and recommendations of the past three SFO Meetings were valuable inputs for this report.

7. The Inspectors also thought desirable to have a first hand assessment of fellowship issues at field level. Views of nominating countries and host countries, those of United Nations system representatives at headquarters and in offices away from headquarters, and those of former trainees were sought whenever possible. In that connexion, visits were made in Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, Burkina Faso and Tunisia. Discussions with senior fellowship officers took place in some headquarters (Geneva, Vienna, New York and Montreal). The experiences and functioning of two NPSA's (the Agence Tunisienne de Cooperation Technique in Tunis and the Canadian Bureau for International Education in Ottawa) were also examined.

8 The Inspectors are thankful to all those who contributed one way or the other to this report. They have strived inasmuch as possible to address not only the issues raised by CCPOQ and referred to in paragraph above but also to cover some other related issues.

II. OVERVIEW OF UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM FELLOWSHIPS

A. Data and reporting on fellowships

9. Almost every organization in the United Nations system has a training and fellowship programme, the magnitude of which depends on the definitions used to gauge outputs. WHO[4] estimates that its total expenditures on fellowships during the period 1990-1996 reached some US$ 152 millions. System wide, the 1995 Annual Statistical Report by IAPSO estimates the total number of fellowships awarded in 1995 to be close to 36,000 for an investment of more than US$ 109 millions, figures which could be either overestimations or underestimations depending on definitions and/or accounting methods used by reporting agencies. For instance, from a closer look at the detailed 1995 IAPSO data, it is difficult to compare on a country by country basis the 376 "fellowships" reported for the then Peoples Republic of Congo at a cost of US$ 6,060 from UNDP funding (average cost per fellowship at about $16) with the 23 "fellowships" listed for Mozambique and which costed US$ 403,630 (average cost of $17,549 per fellowship). Obviously, not the same types of "fellowship" are concerned here and the issue of definition becomes central to any effort at comparing the data from one organization to the other.

10. **The confusion in definitions persists.** The author of the 1976 JIU report on fellowships lamented then that he "found virtually impossible to obtain from the various organizations and agencies of the system exactly comparable or even definitive data" due to "such factors as different ways of measuring delivery, different definitions, different methods of keeping records". Twenty years later, while the situation has improved, the experience this time does prove that the confusion in definitions persists and casts a doubt on the reliability of the data collected.

11. From the outset, the Inspectors decided for this report that, while they were requested by CCPOQ to "develop a common terminology and categories of fellowships to facilitate integrated and comparable reporting", it would have been extremely time consuming if reporting agencies were to "re-arrange" their existing data to suit eventually new categories or definitions of fellowships. They opted instead to have a snapshot of how agencies reported to IAPSO and to their legislative organs on their fellowship programmes, with the expectation to find commonalities, due regard being given to other emerging considerations such as impact, relevance or capacity building.

12. In IAPSO annual statistical reports for 1990 to 1993, the figures given under "fellowships" are said to include "participants in seminars and training courses". In the 1994 report this provision is not mentioned. The 1995 report defined fellowships as "scholarships and study tours awarded to individuals for study and training within various operational activity programmes" and adds that "group training activities, seminars, etc which do not involve individual award of a scholarship are not included". However the related tables for 1995 were labelled "fellowships and scholarships" as if there was a distinction between the two terms in the data given.

13. The fact is that today as in 1976, United Nations system organizations have maintained under the generic term of "fellowships" a varying range of training or learning activities which do not necessarily lend themselves to standardized labelling, assuming such standardization is wanted by all organizations concerned. Consequently, there is no other choice when comparing data than to rely on figures as made available.

14. Many organizations apply the definitions on fellowships and other forms of training described in UNDP's Programme and Project Manual (PPM) while some others like WHO, ITU, UNESCO and IAEA have eventually "customised" their own to better reflect specific activities. Whereas "group training" in ITU covers "participants who received a fellowship to attend seminars, workshops and meetings at the ITU or in the field", the same expression concerns training activities which are not classified in IAEA as fellowships and are thus not taken into account in the data provided by the Agency's fellowship unit. What is called a "study grant" in UNESCO or a "scientific visit" in IAEA is the same activity as a "study tour" in most other organizations and is considered as a "fellowship", on which some organizations report separately while others do not.

15. It should be recalled that this chaotic situation has been a longstanding concern for all organizations involved but they never came around to solve it. A meeting of senior fellowship officers held in Geneva back in 1974[5] noted that "different activities were now classified as fellowships whereas it might be proper to define under the training component of projects, four types of activities". These have been detailed as the following: a) on the job training carried out on projects; b) group training such as training courses, workshops and seminars carried out under one or several projects on a national, regional, interregional or even global basis; c) study tours; d) fellowships for practical, vocational or research training involving academic or non academic studies.

16. The 1976 JIU report notes a definition of fellowship as *"a monetary grant by an organization to a qualified individual to allow him (or her) to follow, at an academic or non academic institution or establishment in a foreign country (and exceptionally in his own country) for a specific period, a planned course of education or training in disciplines and skills which, on his return, would be conducive to the economic and social development of his country and for which (where study abroad is decided) adequate facilities do not exist at home"*.

17. A more recent definition has been put forward by WHO as a follow up to a May 1994 report of the External Auditor to the World Health Assembly.[6] That report included an audit of the fellowship programmes of two Regions (Africa and South East Asia) covering the biennia 1990-1991 and 1992-1993, and recommended *inter alia* that WHO should give a higher priority to monitoring fellowships against achievement of their objectives and evaluating their overall effectiveness. This led to a closer scrutiny of WHO fellowship programmes and to a definition of fellowship mentioned in the Report of the Director General of WHO to the Ninety-ninth Session of the Executive Board[7] in January 1997. It states that *"Today a WHO fellowship is...a specially tailored training activity for an individual or a group for the purpose of fulfilling specific learning objectives, which may be of short or long-term duration, which takes place in a training institution or in the field inside or outside the fellow's country, in response to a nationally approved health or health-related priorities in the context of health for all, and which is consistent with national human resource policies and plans"*.

18. On a system wide basis the underlying issue in adopting common definitions of fellowship and other training activities is whether the term "fellowship" itself should be limited to type (d) or include any one of the other types mentioned in paragraph 16, (some of which are outside the competence of fellowship units), and whether the criteria for granting a fellowship should take into account not only the need for training but also its relevance for the organization concerned and its impact on the development of the recipient country.

19. **Data lacks comparability and reliability**. Annual statistical reports by IAPSO and annual reports on operational activities submitted by agencies to their governing bodies contain data on fellowships but without a uniform format. To facilitate the compilation of data, IAPSO provides each year to all United Nations system organizations pro-forma tables both in hard copies and as pre-programmed spreadsheets on diskettes, together with instructions for completing the reporting requirements. For each country of origin and of study, data is requested on total number of fellowships, number of awards to women, number of man/months as an indicator of duration, and cost in US$, all of these indicators being inputted for the three sources of funding i.e " UNDP"(including core funds and funds in-trust), the "Regular Programme-Budget (RB)", and "OTHER" for all other sources different.

20. From year to year, it is not always the same set of organizations which report to IAPSO. This makes it more difficult to assess trends system wide for a given period. Some organizations have never bothered to provide data. In some instances only the number of new awards during the year and related expenditures (not always) are given with or without gender distribution. Some organizations provide their data based on country of origin of recipients (nationality), or by country of study (or country of assignment) only. Furthermore, final submission of inputs sent to IAPSO is not necessarily made by the fellowship unit. As a consequence, data for the same organization sometimes differ depending on the source, as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: UNRELIABLE DATA: REPORTING BY THE AGENCIES AND BY IAPSO

AGENCIES	BIENNIUM 1994-1995 * SOURCES OF FUNDING			
	UNDP	RB	OTHER	TOTAL
IAEA	45 **(184)**	2,080 **(5,049)**	149 **(425)**	2,274 **(5,658)**
ICAO	1,109 **(1,225)**	0 **(38)**	97 **(59)**	1,206 **(1,322)**
ILO	1,021 **(450)**	1,079 **(1,796)**	4,172 **(7,133)**	6,272 **(9,379)**
UNDDSMS	NA **(1,518)**	NA **(68)**	NA **(3,130)**	4,536 **(4,716)**
UNOPS	10,315 **(11,207)**	0	1,397 **(1,283)**	11,712 **(12,490)**
UNESCO	424 **(385)**	777 **(719)**	704 **(546)**	1905 **(1,650)**
WHO	107 **(57)**	4,394 **(4,061)**	731 **(713)**	5232 **(4,831)**
WIPO	334 **(269)**	1,098 **(620)**	705 **(553)**	2,137 **(1,442)**

*Upper side figures are those provided by Agencies. Bold figures in ( ) are from IAPSO.

21. IAPSO having a mandate focusing mainly on procurement of goods and services, some have questioned whether it is the best entity to collate data on fellowships, ensure the accuracy of returns and monitor or report on the resulting trends. It has thus been suggested that the inter-agency focal point for fellowship activities could take over the responsibility of obtaining and collating the annual system wide data. To avoid duplication, such a prospect could be further studied by future SFO Meetings in close consultation with UNDP which Governing Council had decided at its 36th session that IAPSO should provide a more complete picture on operational activities by including in its annual statistical reports data on other components of technical cooperation (i.e personnel, United Nations volunteers and fellowships). Meanwhile IAPSO, in continuing to discharge its current mandate, should improve its data collection and analysis procedures.

22. **Reporting format needs improvements**. During the period under consideration (1990-1995), efforts have been made to improve the formats of data on the personnel component of operational activities including on fellowships. However there is still room to better inform Member states and legislative bodies. IAPSO reports have traditionally put more emphasis on procurement, an activity for which useful indicators are given on agency execution, national execution, major countries of procurement both from developed and developing countries,..etc. It also publishes and distributes for a fee, a "General Business Guide for potential suppliers of goods and services" which includes "Common guidelines for procurement". It would be as much useful concerning fellowships if the related data on NEX were given alongside those reported by agencies and if indications were made available on United Nations system common requirements for fellowships (instead of each agency having its own brochure).

B. Trends in fellowship programmes

23. United Nations system fellowship programmes in the 90's have been marked by the following trends: a) an increased preference for short and medium term training; b) a shift in placements from developed to developing countries; c) the so-called regionalisation of placements; d) more sensitivity to a gender perspective in nomination awards; e) a growing impact of national execution on most agencies fellowship programmes and the related decrease of the share of UNDP's funding; and f) an increasing concern of legislative organs for relevance, cost-effectiveness and impact.

24. **Increased emphasis on short and medium term training**. Back in the 60's and 70's, when many developing countries lacked both skilled people and adequate training facilities, fellowships often meant going abroad to a developed country for academic or non academic training lasting more than a year. As national or regional training institutions developed and as a cadre of qualified personnel was created, resources for the training component in technical co-operation diminished, leading to more emphasis on short (maximum of two or three months) or medium term fellowships (from three to six months). Data provided by some organizations indicate that about 80 to 85% of their "fellowships" last less than one month and that fellowships of over one year represent only 3%. Except in special cases, no UNDP sponsored fellowship is for over 12 months.

25. **Shift in placements from developed to developing countries**. Based on data from IAPSO's annual statistical reports for 1990 to 1995, table 2 below clearly shows that while in 1990 placements in developing countries stood at 24%, this has increased to 65% in 1995, with a peak of 93% in 1993. The 1976 JIU report noted then that "a majority of fellows in most organizations still train in the developed countries of Europe, North America and Australasia", but this is not the case anymore. The cost of training in developed countries has skyrocketed in some fields of study to such a point that the only options left for fellowship managers were either a reduction in the number of awards or finding cheaper placements. An evaluation of WHO/AFRO's fellowship programmes [8] has established for example that between 1985 and 1995, the average cost of 12 months of fellowship in Africa, Europe and North America excluding travel costs has increased respectively by 32%(from $ 6,800 to $9,000), 145% (from $11,000 to $27,000), and 150% (from $10,800 to $27,000).

26. Paying a disproportionate share of travel costs to go to far away institutions could also not be justified in particular for short term training. This has contributed to a shift in placements from developed countries to developing countries as suitable training institutions became more readily available. Aside from these financial reasons, such placements also found their rationale in the policies in support of TCDC and to the progressive awareness that what was often required was not the best or most sophisticated training but the most adequate one, i.e one which is more adapted to the recipient country's level of development and the capacity of the trainee to benefit from the training.

27. **Regionalisation of placements.** Besides the shift from developed to developing countries, there has also been a trend towards placements within the same region. The evaluation of WHO/AFRO mentioned in paragraph 25 has established that Africa is the prime destination for AFRO's fellowships(65%), with Europe as the second most important one(23%). In a report to the Executive Board,[9] the Director General of WHO also notes that "in the Eastern Mediterranean Region about 60% of fellows are placed within the Region" and that "due to the growing cost of extra-regional fellowships the Regional Director for South East Asia has decided to increase the placement of fellows within the region." Among other factors contributing to this trend is the fact that some training institutions cater to the needs of Member states on a sub-regional or regional basis. In addition, where seminars, workshops, conferences and other group training activities which often take place in-country or within the region are classified as fellowships, the number of awards is consequently inflated.

Table 2: Fellowships and scholarships placed during 1990-1995: Trends in regions of origin and regions of placement

(Data and grouping of countries as from IAPSO Annual statistical reports)

YEAR	% FELLOWSHIPS BY REGION OF ORIGIN				% FELLOWSHIPS BY REGION OF PLACEMENT		
	AFRICA	ASIA & PACIFIC	LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN	ARAB STATES & EUROPE	Developing Countries	Developed Countries	UMDC(a)
1990	17	31	9	43	24	73	3
1991	17	31	9	43	64	32	4
1992	32	32	17	19	54	41	5
1993	39	25	20	16	93	6	1
1994	"Developing countries" : 87			Other: 13	Africa: 28 Asia & Pacific: 36 Latin Am. & C.: 16 Arab States: 7	Europe & C.I.S.: 4 Global inter-regional & other: 9	
1995	31.2	19	23	Arab States: 7 Europe: 6 Tunisia 9 Unspecified 5	Africa: 25.1 Asia & Pacific: 14.5 Latin America & C.: 20.3 Arab States: 4.9	Europe: 2.6 Industrial. Countries: 30.3 Unspecified: 2.2	

(a) **UMDC**: **U**nder Utilized **M**ajor **D**onor **C**ountries i.e. Denmark, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

28. **More sensitivity to a gender perspective**. Following the Beijing Women's Conference in 1995 and previous World Conferences on Women which have stressed the need to ensure that a gender perspective is reflected in all policies and programmes at the national, regional and international levels, Organizations have become more sensitive to gender issues and have strived to increase the number of awards granted to women in their fellowship programmes. The percentage of awards has risen from 8% in 1990 to 26% in 1995. This trend is noticeable even in highly technical fields. IAEA for instance notes that "since the mid-70's, women from all regions continue to be trained in increasing numbers".[10]

Table 3: Fellowships placements in 1990-1995: A gender perspective

(Data from IAPSO annual reports)

YEAR	Total number of fellows reported	Female recipients Nb.	%
1990	31997	2664	8
1991	26556	4177	15
1992	23811	4099	17
1993	23241	4671	20
1994	24774	6522	26
1995	35728	9452	26

29. The percentages in table 3 are averages and some organizations fare better (44% in UNDCP, 38% in WHO, 35% in WIPO for the biennium 1994-1995). While the general trend show an increasing percentage of female fellowship recipients , much more needs to be done to significantly increase the number of awards to women. To achieve such a goal, governments and organizations need to be more proactive when setting up fellowship programmes. As pointed out by IAEA, " the reason for the consistent growth in the training of women is traceable to IAEA's encouragement of applications from women and to the increasing awareness in developing countries of the contribution which can be made by women scientists, engineers and doctors".[11] IMO has a special programme of short-term fellowships offered to women as part of its Medium-term plan for the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector. An in-depth evaluation of UNIDO's industrial human resource development activities carried out in 1993[12] warns that "the absence of gender specific information at the project development stage often results in inadequate provision of women trainees in subsequent stages of project implementation".

30. **Fellowships and NEX**. As a modality in UNDP, NEX has evolved from the experiments with government execution in the late 70's, to its formal institution in 1989 (resolution 44/211) by the General Assembly which further decided in 1992 (resolution 47/199) that " national execution should be the norm for programmes and projects supported by the United Nations system, taking into account the needs and capacities of recipient countries".

31. For most Agencies, NEX translated into a sharp reduction in their implementation of UNDP funded fellowships. They felt that "the demand for training was inadequately reflected in projects and programmes"[13]on the basis of a 1993 UNDP review of technical cooperation in Africa[14] which found out that

the average percentage of all financing allocated to technical cooperation represented only 12.1% compared to 75.9% for the personnel component. That study concluded then that "somewhat surprisingly given the volume of debate in recent years about changing the technical cooperation input mix in favour of training and supplies and equipment, the personnel component remains predominant [15]".

32. Table 4 shows however that the total number of fellowships increased after 1992 . This apparent contradiction with agencies' views stems from poor reporting by IAPSO. More detailed data for the years 1994 and 1995 do indicate that while the share of fellowships awarded by agencies remained stable, fellowships awarded under NEX have almost doubled. As a consequence, total UNDP sponsored fellowships have increased by 35%. IAPSO should report fellowships awarded under NEX alongside those reported by agencies.

Table 4: Impact of NEX on implementation of fellowships

YEAR	**TOTAL** fellowships "ALL UN SOURCES" in IAPSO Stat. Reports	IAPSO detailed data in electronic format for 1994-1995		
		TOTAL/AGENCIES (Nb. from UNDP)	**TOTAL/ NEX** (Nb. from UNDP)	**GRAND TOTAL** (Nb. from UNDP)
1990	31977	-	-	-
1991	26556	-	-	-
1992	20619	-	-	-
1993	23774	-	-	-
1994	**24774***	**19633** (8260)	**5132** (5132)	**24765*** (13392)
1995	**35728***	**26058** (8848)	**9633** (9633)	**35691*** (18081)

* There are slight differences in totals for the same year probably due to computing errors

33. **Trends in sources of funding**. Based on a sample of six organizations (IAEA, ICAO, ITU, UNOPS, UNESCO and WHO) charts n° 1 and n° 2 show *inter alia* that: a) UNDP funding has been reduced for all the agencies in the sample (between - 45% for IAEA to -88% for ITU), except UNOPS which registers an increase of 592%; b) as if to "compensate" for the sharp reduction in UNDP funding, some agencies made an effort to increase funding from the regular budget, in particular UNESCO (+701%) and ITU(+324%) and c) all organizations in the sample also increased their funding from " OTHER" sources, proof of a more dynamic and proactive policy to find alternative sources of funding at a time when there are less funds available through the traditional UNDP and regular budget sources. System wide, organizations should therefore strive to rely more on such alternative sources and those which are unable to do so are bound to jeopardise their fellowship programmes.

CHART No. 1 : Percentage change in funding of fellowships in 1994-1995 over 1990-1991 by source of funding and by organization

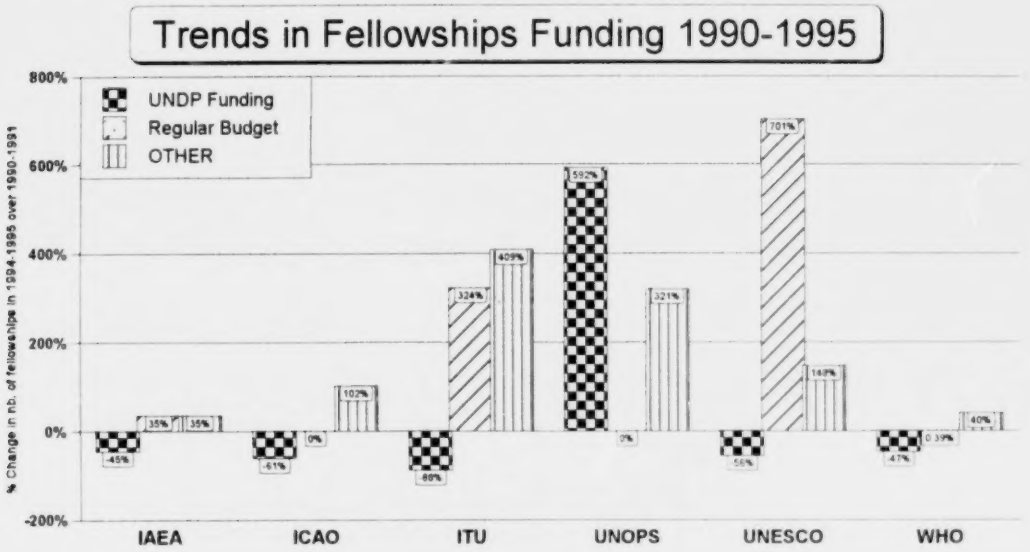
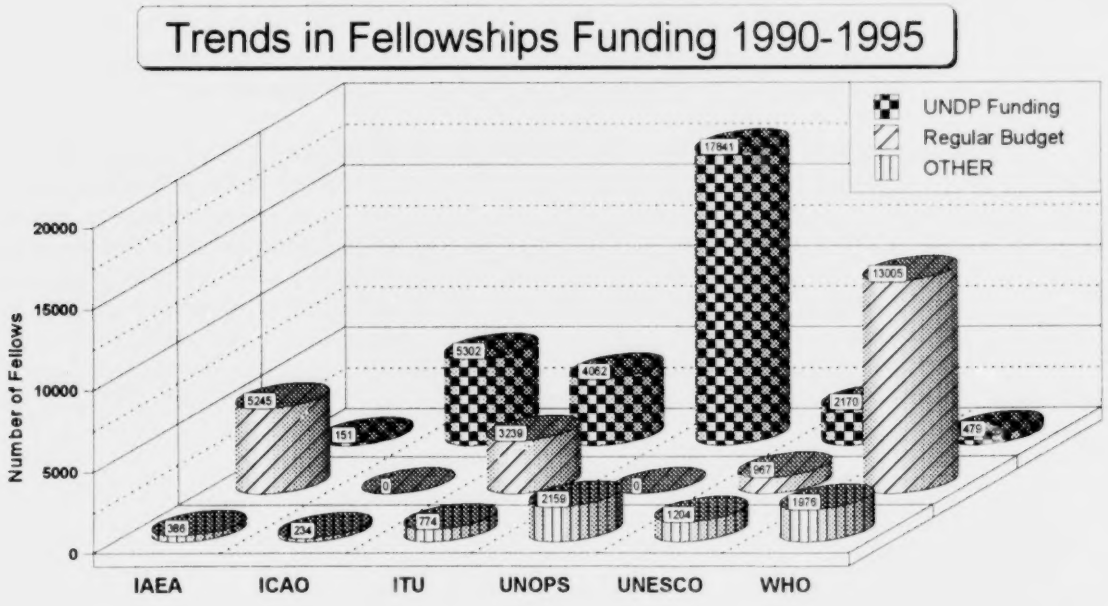


CHART No. 2: Total number of fellowships funded in 1990-1995 by source of funding and by organization



C. Fellowships and capacity building

34. **Capacity building and how it relates to fellowships.** Capacity building was a major concern for Member states when they adopted General Assembly resolution 44/211, a concern shared by the donor community at large. Spending billions of dollars during the 50's and 60's to foster development in Third World countries on the assumption that the State should be the engine for social and economic progress proved to be a dismal failure. Corrective policies in the 70's and the 80's stressed instead that the State should play a minimal and catalyst role. Most of the evaluations of technical cooperation projects carried out in the late 80's led to the conclusion that ensuring national capacity and strengthening of institutions were *sine qua non* conditions for any sustained development. In other words, the prime objective of technical cooperation should not be "to do things" but rather "to help get things done".

35. The "Dictionary of Public Administration[16] defines capacity building as "any system, effort or process which includes among its major objectives strengthening the capacity of elected chief executive officers, chief administrative officers, and programme managers in general purpose government to plan, implement, manage or evaluate policies, strategies or programs designed to impact on social conditions in the community". For some this definition is narrow because it equates capacity building with training whereas the concept should be widened.

36. For the contributors to the 1993 UNDP study mentioned in paragraph 31, "capacity building is characterised by three main activities: skill upgrading both general and job specific; procedural improvements; and organizational strengthening". The same view has been expressed by participants to a workshop organised by UNDDSMS who considered that capacity building entails two mutually supportive and complementary efforts i.e "human resources development ..and institution building" understood as "the establishment, reform and adaptation of organizational structures, procedures and operational tools in order to give shape to distinct individual or group activities and transform them cost effectively into required organizational outputs".[17]

37. United Nations system fellowship programmes, inasmuch as they are geared to human resources development, do have a *prima facie* valid claim for contributing to capacity building. However, as emphasized in a recent(1996) study by the Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID),[18] it should be kept in mind that while human resources development is an important dimension of capacity building, the problem for most organizations is not so much the availability of well trained personnel, but how they were utilized.

38. To assess the contribution of United Nations system fellowships to capacity building, it is therefore not enough to take only into account -as it is often the case- the total number of awards or total expenditures but to go beyond these criteria "by proxy" and measure their real impact, a difficult if not impossible task for many reasons.

39. **Limiting factors for the contribution of fellowships to capacity building.** Fellowships can contribute to capacity-building only if trainees, assuming they have received adequate training, do go back to their home countries(when training is abroad) and do get the opportunity to put to use their newly acquired knowledge or skills for which granting a fellowship was the purpose in the first instance. Thus at issue is not only the well known "brain drain" phenomenon which was on the agenda of the 11th SFO Meeting in Paris in 1994 but also what could be called "brain neglect" for lack of a better term.

40. Typically, brain drain, sometimes described as reverse transfer of knowledge and technology, relates to trainees who, at the completion of their training abroad(usually in a developed country), decide not to return to their country. Whatever the rationale from the point of view of the trainee, this decision does have a negative impact on the project or programme concerned and for the development of human resources of the recipient country. How important is the phenomenon is a matter of debate. Some estimate that it affects 50 to 80% of qualified trainees in Africa.[19] It has received considerable attention from such organizations as UNESCO, ILO, UNCTAD, UNITAR, etc. A recent symposium on this subject was held in Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire) in February 1997 and participants adopted a declaration calling on African governments to hold in 1998 a Ministerial Conference and a Summit of Heads of States to deal with the issue.[20]

41. Without minimizing the continued impact of brain drain, it appears that new conditions are bound to limit its recurrence. Due to new stringent immigration laws in many industrialised countries, it is more difficult to get entry visas for studies without proper backing and lawful residence permits without *bona fide* justification. Moreover,

the shift in placements from developed to developing countries and the trend towards regionalisation and in-country training should contribute to reduce new waves of brain drain.

42. Most United Nations system organizations require from the beneficiaries of fellowship awards a commitment to return home after completion of their training, and in some instances an undertaking to serve a minimum period of time depending on the length of training. Some organizations also include in their requirements an undertaking from the fellow to reimburse either the total or a proportionate amount of sums received should he or she abandon the study programme abroad or do not return home.

43. It is doubtful whether such commitments can be successfully enforced. In some instances the trainee does go back home but decides instead to get employment elsewhere, including in the private sector. During field visits, a suggestion has been made that if reimbursement of the cost of training is required it should be requested from the substitute employer. While some consideration should be given to such a possibility which seems more implementable, it raises the issue of whether capacity-building should be viewed only in relation with human resources development in the public sector alone. There is a growing consensus that donors and recipient governments alike should recognize that technical cooperation for capacity building does not mean that capacity has to be in the public sector only and that the potentials of NGO's, private sector and entities from civil society in general should be tapped. The 1993 UNDP sponsored study on technical cooperation in Africa notes that "a technical cooperation programme that nurtures private rural artisans or plumbers with training, credit and financing of initial contracts with villagers is much more likely to leave something behind".[21]

44. Among the initiatives taken by UN system organizations to reverse the brain drain phenomenon, mention should be made of the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs programme launched by UNESCO in 1991 and the TOKTEN programme initiated by UNDP.

45. "The UNESCO Chairs and the visiting professorships associated with them are meant to help developing countries, with the support of institutions from the North, to develop teaching, training and research infrastructures".[22] The aim is to strengthen inter-university cooperation and networking, with particular emphasis on support to higher education by helping to reduce the outflow of students and scientists and to increase the inflow of professors and scientists towards developing countries. By 1994 some 74 UNESCO Chairs had been established and 80 were under consideration.

46. TOKTEN which stands for "transfer of knowledge trough expatriate nationals", has been initiated in 1977 by UNDP to counter the brain drain of professionals from developing countries with a "brain gain". Under this programme, talented men and women volunteer their services to their countries of origin as consultants for short-term assignments. Waiving normally high fees, these consultants receive an air- ticket plus living expenses of between US$3,000 to 4,000 per month, about half the cost of market rate expertise. Their competences cover a large variety of highly specialised technical fields, from accounting, agriculture and banking to surgery, telecommunications and water resources development. Since 1994, TOKTEN has come under the umbrella of the United Nations Volunteers.

47. Returning home is not by itself sufficient for a trainee to contribute to capacity-building, unless his or her skills are put to proper use and that often depends on the recipient government. For different reasons(political, religious, gender, ethnic or otherwise), well trained professionals are paid and left aside without being given responsibilities corresponding to their level of expertise. The effects of this **"brain neglect"** can be as damaging as those of brain drain, not to mention the high cost of such misuse or underutilisation of human resources. A 1989 UNDP assessment of technical cooperation in African development[23] came to the conclusion that *"African countries have well educated and competent professionals who are not being used effectively in their country's development programmes. African governments and donors are at times too quick to bring in outside expertise without exploring the African capabilities available at home or that could be attracted to return"*.

48. The debates during the 1997 symposium in Abidjan mentioned in paragraph 42 are a testimony that this assessment is still valid in many countries. This situation stems from a shared responsibility of both recipient

governments and the donor community. In that connexion, the repeated calls on United Nations system organizations to increase substantially their use of local and/or regional expertise, should become an even greater commitment especially when such expertise has been gained through their sponsored fellowship programmes.

49. A 1991 OECD report[24] concluded *inter alia* that "the use of developing country consultants by donor country consulting firms should be encouraged and efforts made to enable developing country consulting firms to compete with donor country consulting firms" and that "donors could support training programmes for recipient country consultants". Most former fellows met during field visits have complained that after their training they seldom are called upon to serve as consultant or trainer of new trainees or that they have not been offered refresher courses to allow them to keep up with evolving technologies. In some cases this situation protects vested interests but quite often it is the direct result of lack of information on the whereabouts of former trainees. Agencies that have not done so yet should be encouraged to create, maintain and regularly update a databank of local expertise in their fields of competence. Access to such databanks should be made available on Internet or other electronic media for a wider public and in particular for potential contractors for procurement of services to United Nations organizations.

50. Another limiting factor to capacity-building is often the lack of an enabling environment. There are many cases of returned fellows who cannot fully contribute to a sustainable development because their working conditions are not conducive to efficiency. Poor or inadequate impact cannot therefore be blamed *per se* on the quality of the training received. Most experts agree that human resources development usually go in tandem with institution building and strengthening. Unfortunately as noted in the 1996 HIID study[25] prepared for UNDP, "there is evidence that public sector capacity in many developing countries declined because of political and economic crises that affected the budgets of public institutions and the salaries, prestige and stability of public sector employment". A similar observation is made in the 1993 UNDP publication on reforms for capacity-building in Africa[26] where the authors raise the following question to justify that the quest for capacity building encompass in some countries a direct support to general operating costs:

> *"How can government agencies become stronger when gasoline, paper, typewriter ribbons and light bulbs lack; when budget support for maintenance and spare parts evaporate; when electricity bills go unpaid; when vehicles are few and vulnerable, budget for fuel are tiny, and even when money for stamps and paper may be hard to find?"*

51. **Some success stories and some questions about fellowship programmes.** Due to the limiting factors mentioned above, the contribution of United Nations system fellowship programmes to capacity-building has often been assessed on the sole basis of the total number of awards and total expenditures thereof. Based on their annual reports, most organizations seem nonetheless satisfied that their fellowship programmes have somehow contributed to capacity-building. Some have reported what they consider to be success stories but questions must also be raised about the future of some programmes.

52. **IAEA** has trained approximately 5000 fellows and scientific visitors during 1991-1995, and less than 1% of them did not return home. Fellows are required to serve in their home country institutes for a minimum of two years after their training and a large number of trainees have become senior leaders in the national or international communities. Many heads of national atomic energy authorities have received their start through the Agency's training programme.

53. **UNESCO** is particularly proud of its Fellowship Bank Scheme for which the 27th General Conference approved an allocation of US$ 1000, 000 under the 1994-1995 regular programme. Member states and Institutions are also encouraged to offer fellowships. UNESCO then administers those fellowships and may enter into cost-sharing arrangements using part of the aforementioned allocation as seed money. Beneficiaries are post graduates/professionals interested by innovative training and high level studies abroad. As part of the results, opportunities have been given to a number of deserving candidates to continue and undertake advance research studies leading to a Master's or Doctorate's degree, scientific papers of high caliber have been submitted for publication in specialised publications; promising and qualified specialists with physical handicap have been given the opportunity to complete their training; and a "multiplier effect" has been achieved as some beneficiaries have shared knowledge gained abroad with those concerned upon their return home.

54. UNEP considers that during 1990-1995, at least 50% of fellowships offered within the Regional Advisory Services "have enabled African officials to participate in UNCED preparatory meetings and in workshops/seminars related to the implementation of Agenda 21 as well as in national environment focal points meetings at sub-regional level. The impact of such exposure has resulted in greater awareness of an environmentally-sound development, increased knowledge on the part of national focal points and improved design and implementation of programmes and policies to deal with environmental problems. It is estimated that the fellowship programme also had a multiplier effect as beneficiaries have in turn passed their newly acquired skills and knowledge to their colleagues at the national level.

55. UNETPSA is probably one of the most successful collective efforts by the international community to tackle the issue of training for the black majority in Southern Africa and in the Territories under Portuguese administration in Africa during the colonial and apartheid years. Formally established by General Assembly resolution 2349(XXII) of 19 December 1967, UNETPSA integrated earlier special programmes. Following the independence of Zimbabwe and the former Portuguese territories, UNETPSA's fellowships were granted only to Namibians and South Africans. When Namibia also became independent in 1990, it was decided that as from 31 December, 1992 new awards would be reserved exclusively to disadvantaged South Africans.

56. Until 1 May, 1996 the Programme had been administered by the Secretary General (through UNDDSMS and its predecessors) in consultation with an intergovernmental Advisory Committee in New York. Since then it is under the management of the Administrator of UNDP, and projects in South Africa are implemented by UNOPS in collaboration with the UNDP country office and in consultation with a local advisory board composed of representatives from government, tertiary institutions, the donor community, civil society organizations and the private sector.

57. From 1990 to 1995, UNETPSA has granted close to 11000 fellowships to Namibians and mostly to South Africans and the primary goal of the programme is now to contribute to human resources development in the new non racial and democratic South Africa. A list of UNETPSA prominent graduates has been established by the Programme Coordinator's office in Pretoria and includes Premiers of three Provinces and other government leaders, parastatal, university and academic officials, international civil servants , and influential members from NGO's and the business community. Comments made by former trainees at a meeting during the field visit in South Africa were all in favour of maintaining and strengthening the Programme which, under General Assembly resolution 50/131 of 20 December 1995 has been extended as a distinct operation for "three to five years beyond April 1994". What happens after April 1999 is therefore undecided.

58. Not every aspect of UNETPSA's operations should be considered successful though. Resolution 50/131 had also mandated that the catalyst function of the Programme should be used to expand " the co-sponsorship and job-placement arrangements with corporations, non-governmental organizations and educational institutions". Much remains to be accomplished in that regard and, with the concurrence of the host country, serious consideration should be given to extending and eventually expanding the mandate of UNETPSA beyond the 1999 deadline and beyond its current geographical coverage limited to South Africa. One conclusion which can be drawn from the field visit in Namibia is that in many ways the situation there in terms of training needs of the disadvantaged segment of the population is not much different in nature if not in scale as it is in South Africa. There could be real benefits and impact if UNETPSA were to be allowed to resume granting fellowships to Namibians as it used to do until 1992.

59. UNDDSMS and its predecessors have had a training and fellowships section since 1947. Over the period 1985 to 1995, some 40,500 fellowships have been granted in the fields of public sector management and capacity-building, economic policy and management, social development, natural resources and energy planning and management, and private sector development. They played an important role in the design and implementation of the special programmes which were later merged to become UNETPSA. From 1990 to 1995, UNDDSMS has registered a steady decline in the number of fellowships awarded (from 9,765 in 1990-1991 to 4,563 in 1994-1995). This decline is partly due to the transfer of responsibility for UNETPSA to UNDP in May 1995. In June 1997, UNDDSMS has been absorbed into the new Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) through consolidation, and there are uncertainties on the role the United Nations as an organization intends to or should play in the management of fellowship programmes. In the Inspectors view, any decision affecting previously mandated programmes and missions covered by the former UNDDSMS should be reported to the General Assembly for its consideration.

60. INSTRAW has recognized since the first session of its Board of Trustees in 1980 that it should include among its activities a fellowship programme and that "the strengthened focus on women in the context of developmental issues which has been emerging during the Decade for Women has underscored the need for greater resources to be provided for fellowships in this field". From Mexico City in 1975 to Beijing in 1995, all the four World Conferences on Women have emphasized the role played by women in the development process. System wide, there has been a declared commitment to ensure that a gender perspective is reflected in all policies and programmes. Unfortunately, the experience of INSTRAW shows that except for an allocation of $ 50,000 in 1983 and another one of $ 40,000 in 1988-89 there has been no funding of fellowships.

61. At its seventeenth session held in February 1997, the Board of Trustees came to the conclusion that "*considering that a fellowship programme is both costly and complex to administer, that it requires a team of professional researchers trainers and an institutional structure for its functioning, the fellowship programme should be deferred until the Institute's Director finds ways and means to re-initiate it. When making its decision, the Board should also take into consideration the fact that INSTRAW is currently in a process of transformation in which its research and training programme has yet not reached its consolidated form*". It is troubling that almost two decades after its establishment, INSTRAW has not yet found sustainable sources of funding for an admittedly important aspect of its mandate. As pointed out in paragraph 33, UNDP and regular budget should not be viewed as the only sources of funding and INSTRAW should be more assertive to find other sources of funding a fellowship programme.

D. Towards a common approach to definitions and categories of fellowships

62. The report on the last SFO Meeting noted that "*The participants at the April 1997 Vienna meeting had been specifically 'requested to consider the development of common terminology and categories of fellowships to facilitate integrated and comparable reporting*" and concluded that "*Some efforts were made during the meeting to propose terminology acceptable to all , but in the end it was apparent that the matter remained in dispute, for reasons inter alia related to the different constituencies of the respective agencies*".

63. While recognizing that each agency sees merits in its current definitions and categories of training activities, it is important to stress that the main objective of developing a common terminology as requested by CCPOQ is "to facilitate integrated and comparable reporting". The lack of comparability and the uneven submission of related figures deprive Member states and legislative organs the opportunity to better assess the importance and the relevance of fellowships and training programmes. It would therefore be useful and less time consuming if all organizations and IAPSO reported on fellowships on an agreed upon standard format, using the same definitions, it being understood that standardization in reporting does not necessarily mean standardization in operations.

64. **Criteria for categorisation of fellowships**. UNDP has identified in its PPM four different categories of training. Among them are "fellowships" which may include academic study or specially designed programme involving the transfer of know-how and knowledge, "group training" either abroad or in-country designed as a flexible mechanism to meet the requirements of a group of individuals within the framework of a project, and "study tours" to provide senior management an opportunity to broaden their understanding and upgrade their efficiency through visits in selected countries and institutions. From that categorisation, there seem to be a difference between "fellowships" and "study tours". However, as noted in the report of the SFO Meeting in Vienna, "most agencies included study tours among fellowships". Some even add "group training" to these two categories. Common criteria need therefore to be defined.

65. There is a general consensus that a fellowship should be extended only to a qualified individual or group of qualified individuals and that the purpose of the related training should be to fulfill specific learning objectives. In that connexion, an agreed upon and transparent selection process is essential to insure that nominees for a fellowship are indeed qualified ones. Concerning entitlements, most fellows receive a monthly stipend while participants to study tours are granted a daily subsistence allowance, the base rates of which are approved by CCAQ and used as maximum rates, each agency being free to apply a reduced rate(often 70%) depending on local conditions. There are however cases under cost-sharing arrangements where the beneficiary of a fellowship is not entitled to a stipend because the host country offers free accommodation and meals, and free access to local transportation and libraries, the agency involved paying only for international travel and eventually pocket money.

66. Concerning the duration of fellowships, UNDP considers that, based on experience, a duration of at least four months is deemed necessary to enable fellows to handle their learning tasks effectively, including overcoming in certain cases language and cultural barriers to learning. In most organizations, where payment of a stipend is called for, fellowships last an average of 3-4 months, and rarely exceed one year. However, taking into account the fact that study tours are classified as "fellowships", duration as a criterion should be considered with flexibility.

67. Some have often viewed a fellowship as implying training abroad, in-country training being an exception. It is nowadays recognized -albeit with reluctance in some agencies- that a fellowship can be granted for study within the project country. Whenever appropriate, this policy should even be encouraged to give disadvantaged citizens better access to training institutions as they cannot afford the increasingly high tuition fees and cost of living required to attend such institutions. The rationale behind the policies of UNETPSA is applicable in many other countries.

68. The WHO approach to the definition of fellowships merits due consideration as it addresses the issue of impact and relevance. It expresses the concern that WHO fellowship programmes should be in response to national sectoral priorities established in the context of global policy guidelines (health for all) and that such priorities should be translated into nationally-approved human resources development policies and plans. This approach constitutes an element of best practices which should be emulated. Such criteria should have an increased weight in the planning and programming of fellowships. In the absence of a national or sectoral formal human resource development plan, it should at least be required that requests for fellowships be based on clear and coherent policies on human resources development. Furthermore, the quest for impact and relevance should also be of concern to other stakeholders.

69. Finally, considering that entitlements for United Nations system fellowships are rather generous (standard rates are higher than those applied by most bilateral donors), there should be among the criteria more stress on excellence, not only excellence of candidates, but also excellence of training institutions. In its "Guide to Financial Administration" for field officers, UNESCO advises that "fellowships should support only those applicants who appear to have exceptional merit, or who demonstrate that they possess outstanding potential to contribute to the social, cultural and/or economic development of their country". For training institutions, associating with the prestige of the United Nations system should be a label of quality and each organization in its field of competence should be the best adviser to Member States on the excellence of training offered by such institutions, irrespective of the modality of execution. This need for excellence and quality control should be reflected in the selection of training institutions to be included in the data banks set up by United Nations system organizations. For fellows, proof of the excellence of the training received could also be materialised by a certificate or diploma as a testimony of their accomplishment.

RECOMMENDATION No. 1

(a) ***Definition of fellowship: A fellowship in the United Nations system is a specially tailored or selected training activity that provides a monetary grant to a qualified individual or group of qualified individuals for the purpose of fulfilling special learning objectives; such training which may be of short or long duration and may take place in an appropriate training institution or in the field inside or outside the fellow's country, should be in response to nationally-approved human resources policies and plans and should aim at impact and relevance for all stakeholders involved.***

(b) for reporting purposes, participants to seminars, workshops, technical meetings or conferences should not be classified as "fellows" unless a case can be made that attendance to such training activities forms an integral part of a fellowship programme as defined under a); fellowships entailing payment of a stipend or a daily subsistence allowance (type I) should be reported on separately from those awarded under other arrangements (type II);

(c) United Nations system organizations and IAPSO should adopt a uniform format of reporting on fellowships based on an agreed definition and providing reliable data which better reflect the trends in fellowship programmes and in particular the efforts made in compliance with mandates on national execution, gender perspective and TCDC;

(d) To stress the excellence attached to United Nations system sponsored fellowship programmes, consideration should be given within the inter-agency coordination mechanism on fellowships to establishing common standards [to be used by each organization] for delivering a certificate of excellence to training institutions and meritorious trainees;

(e) United Nations system organizations should maintain and/or update data banks of local or regional expertise taking into account the contribution made by their fellowship programmes; to foster an increased use of such expertise, access to these data banks should be widely open and providers of services to the United Nations system should be encouraged to avail themselves of that expertise.

70. The proposed definition in 1 a) is derived from the one approved by WHO, with some additions which the Inspectors consider as improvements. The term "qualified" attached to "individual" is meant to underline the need to select and nominate not only an excellent candidate but also one who can better contribute to a smoother and more cost-effective implementation. The rationale for other elements of the definition has been developed in paragraphs 65 to 69. Concerning reporting procedures, comparability could be met only if reporting agencies used the same criteria for classifying their fellowships. Hence the need to distinguish type I fellowships regrouping awards based on stipend and daily subsistence allowance, and type II fellowships based on cost-sharing arrangements.

RECOMMENDATION No. 2

(a) The Secretary General, in consultation with the Administrator of UNDP and with Member States concerned, should submit to the General Assembly at its 54th session, an evaluation report on the implementation of resolution 50/131 of 20 December 1995 and on the need to maintain UNETPSA as a separate Programme with an expanded geographical coverage;

(b) The Secretary General should submit to the General Assembly at its 54th session a report on the training and fellowship programmes carried out by different units in the secretariat and make proposals in view to enhance their implementation and promote better coordination;

(c) INSTRAW should review its fellowships funding policies so as to be able to initiate and sustain a fellowship programme relevant with its mandate.

III. MANAGEMENT OF FELLOWSHIPS

A. Stakeholders and processes in fellowship programmes.

71. The 1976 JIU report had noted, borrowing from a WHO document, that the award and management of a fellowship constituted a joint undertaking by four different parties with interlocking responsibilities. These parties (the term stakeholders would seem more appropriate today) are the donor, sponsoring or executing organization which "plans and arranges for the training, selects the fellow, supervises his training and evaluates it"; the sending government which "nominates candidates and undertakes to make full use of the knowledge and experience gained by the fellow once he has returned"; the host country or institution which "receives the fellow... and undertakes to provide and in some cases to co-supervise the training"; and finally the fellow who "undertakes to complete the course, return to his country and place his services at the latter's disposal".

72. Traditionally, organizations tend to be involved in three main areas or processes in a fellowship: planning and programming; selection of a qualified candidate; placement ,follow-up or monitoring and post training evaluation. Two additional phases need to be also considered i.e the use of the fellow's newly acquired knowledge or skills and impact evaluation, both of which should be of concern not only to the sending government as it is often considered to be the case, but also to sponsoring organizations.

B. Agency execution versus government execution?

73. Participants to the March 1992 SFO Meeting in Turin discussed at length the extent to which implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989 on national execution could impact on their role and functions in the delivery of fellowship programmes. They came to conclusions which have been endorsed and reconfirmed by the successive SFO Meetings in Paris in 1994 and in Vienna in 1997. These conclusions, recalled hereafter, detail what agencies consider to be their comparative advantages in providing services to beneficiary countries in the implementation of fellowship programmes:

- *"(i) The United Nations agencies had a worldwide perspective on training opportunities and several fellowship services had computerized data bases of training institutions which gave them an indispensable tool for the speedy identification of the most appropriate training programmes. In addition to the data banks of training institutions and their worldwide network of contacts, the fellowship services had immediate access to the substantive advisory services of their own agencies;*

- *"(ii) The United Nations agencies benefited from modern communications systems, notably fax and increasingly also electronic mail which were not always available in developing countries, although day-to day fellowship management required the fastest possible means of centralised communications;*

- *"(iii) Evaluation and screening of fellowship nominations were often undertaken in a more objective manner by United Nations agencies. It was not certain wether adequate vetting could be achieved at the national level where considerations other than technical ones sometimes prevailed. In the evaluation of candidatures, the United Nations fellowship services paid attention not only to academic qualifications and technical skills but also to linguistic proficiency;*

- *"(iv) The United Nations fellowship services were able to negotiate with host countries lower fees for training and fellowships, using to the advantage of the beneficiary countries the argument of economy of size, since several fellows from a number of countries could be placed through the United Nations system auspices in the same training institution;*

- *"(v) The United Nations fellowship services appeared to have a distinct advantage in the area of financial coordination, particularly since they did not have the problems faced by some national authorities regarding currency transfers. Fellows had to be provided with funds on a systematic and regular basis which would be difficult to achieve for a number of national authorities in view of strict currency regulations;*

- *"(vi) The United Nations fellowship services were able to provide social welfare assistance to fellows which might be difficult for national authorities dealing with a relatively small number of fellows. The problem of insurance for fellows and study tour participants was of particular importance in this context and it had taken a number of years even for the United Nations system as a whole to set up adequate insurance scheme for fellows;*

- *"(vii) The United Nations agencies applied a standardized level of allowances as well as standard rules and procedures with respect to fellows which facilitated the work of the NPSAs (National Placement and Supervising Agencies) and host training institutions. National execution could well entail a multiplicity of allowances, rules and procedures applied by different national authorities;*

- *"(viii) The United Nations agencies benefited from a well established international structure throughout the world, notably through the UNDP offices, which permitted them to respond quicker to eventual emergencies concerning fellows;*

- *"(ix) The United Nations system benefited from a high level of prestige which lent credibility to placement requests for fellows made by United Nations agencies;*

- *"(x) Although the issue of better monitoring and follow-up had been listed as a possible argument in favour of national execution, many participants felt that it was more difficult for national authorities to monitor the implementation of fellowship programmes than for the United Nations agencies which were often in closer contact with the host authorities and training institutions."*

74 Taken at face value, these arguments made by fellowship units in favour of agency execution as opposed to government execution seem to be self serving as they highlight on one hand the benefits of the former and on the other hand the potential drawbacks and weaknesses of the latter. In that connexion it should be recalled that government execution is defined in the PPM as "the arrangement whereby UNDP entrusts to a Government the responsibility for the mobilization of UNDP-financed inputs and their effective application, in combination with the Government's own and other available resources, towards the attainment of the project's objectives". Before the introduction of NEX and the decision that it should become the "norm", agency execution was the norm and some organizations believe that this should continue to be the case for countries which they consider not capable yet to undertake national execution.

75. However, the reality is that all developing countries are involved one way or the other in the management of training and fellowship programmes funded from national budgets and that , where specialised or academic training abroad is called for, many of them usually have had a past experience with the training institutions concerned through national, bilateral or multinational funding. Not surprisingly, most line ministries in charge of their own fellowship programme with fellows placed in foreign countries feel that they can as well administer United Nations system fellowships. This explains the increasing trend towards NEX described in paragraph 36 above.

76. An additional factor is the issue of costs. Some countries feel that the opportunity of saving through national execution the amount of overhead costs which would have been otherwise deducted from their indicative planning figure to reimburse implementing agencies should not be overlooked. During the field visits, it was argued by some national administrations that in many cases, to place their own fellows, they also use the services of the same NPSAs as those used by United Nations system agencies (British Council in the UK, C.I.E.S in France or C.B.I.E in Canada). They consider that it is more cost-effective to deal directly with such NPSAs for placement of UNDP funded fellowships without involving United Nations agencies.

77. The question raised therefore is whether implementation of United Nations system fellowship programmes should be an issue of agency execution versus government execution. There is still a misconception of national execution. As a 1994 JIU report on NEX[27] found out, "Some specialised agencies are reluctant to become involved in operations for which they are not implementing agencies, sometimes because they wish to maintain the quality of their services, and also, no doubt, exclusive control over their technologies." On the other hand a 1995 UNDP sponsored evaluation of NEX[28] concluded for its part that some government representatives interpreted the term "national" in

national execution to imply simply that "project work was to be carried out by national rather than international personnel" and consequently that the policy required "a wholesale shift of all the responsibilities and prerogatives from United Nations agencies to governments...and the replacement of United Nations specialised agencies by government bodies". Both studies emphasised that specialised agencies should play a role in the implementation of projects and programmes under NEX and that UNDP should review the then applicable agency support costs (new support costs arrangements have been introduced effective 1 January 1997) so as to create incentives for such a move.

78. The changing role of fellowship services was emphasized at the SFO Meeting in Vienna and "many participants agreed that their own services had also to change from their past administrative role to a more informational and capacity building role", with the responsibility to "continue to develop procedural fellowship guidelines" and ensure their implementation, and also "to function as a clearing house for information to assist developing countries in finding the most appropriate training institutions even in respect to countries capable of national execution". If agencies have indeed a role to play in the implementation of fellowships under NEX, it would be very important to ensure that whatever the modality of execution, all United Nations system -sponsored fellowships retain common features and benefit from the overall facilities, bargaining power and prestige of United Nations organizations. In practical terms, it would be difficult to justify for instance that fellows in the same training institution and following the same courses receive widely different levels of stipend or lack appropriate insurance coverage based on whether they are under agency execution or NEX.

RECOMMENDATION No. 3

(a) To support national execution, Organizations should establish data banks of training institutions in their particular field of activities and make them accessible to national administrations involved in the implementation of fellowships either upon request or online;

(b) fees negotiated with host institutions by United Nations system organizations should be considered as "UN rates" applicable to all System sponsored fellows irrespective of modality of execution and fellows under NEX should be insured within collective insurance contracts entered into by United Nations system organizations;

(c) where training takes place abroad, disparities in allowances to trainees placed in the same institution should not exist or should be kept to a minimum, whatever the organization concerned or the modality used for execution;

(d) for countries facing problems of transfer of funds and which are involved in national execution of fellowship programmes, arrangements should be made through the Resident Coordinator system to guaranty payment of fees to host institutions and allowances to fellows;

(e) When using the facilities offered under support cost arrangements for UNDP supported projects, nominating countries involved in national execution of fellowship programmes are urged to take full advantage of the experience and network of contacts of United Nations system organizations in their respective fields of competence;

C. Host countries and NPSAs

79. Because training involves sometimes travel and placement abroad, the policies of host countries and their national placement and supervising agencies have a direct bearing on the management of United Nations system fellows. Fellowship services have long recognized the contribution made by NPSAs in inviting them to attend the SFO Meetings as observers. At the SFO Meetings in Paris and in Vienna, NPSAs stressed their concerns which relate *inter alia* to the persistent downward trend in the number of training requests from United Nations system agencies, the lack of information on restructuring issues in the organizations and on projects to which the training is intended to contribute, and on more general terms what could be expected in the future. Except in Vienna where a placement agency from Tunisia took part , only NPSAs from Canada and Europe attended previous SFO Meetings.

80. Costs factors explain why there are fewer requests for placements in some developed countries : with diminishing resources and skyrocketing tuition fees, organizations have often been obliged to either make the placement themselves or to rely on NPSAs which do not charge administration fees. This issue of fees invoiced by some NPSAs was on the agenda of the SFO Meeting in Turin in 1992. Those charging fees justified their practice by the fact they were compelled to do so as subsidies from their government were either limited or were not meant to be used in support of multilateral programmes. Those offering free services were entirely subsidised and were able to provide such services as part of the overall development cooperation policies of their government. As already recommended in 1976, host governments should be encouraged to extend or continue to extend their NPSAs the support needed to provide free services.

Table 5: Placement and administration fees policies by some NPSAs

NPSA	Conditions offered UN sytem organizations
ATCT(Tunisia)	No fees. Government funded.
BRITISH C.(UK)	A. Fellows - £330 for placement and full financial administration - £255 for self placement(a confirmed offer from a training institution is required) - £85 Monthly management fee B. Industrial study tours - £307/person up to four people where 8 weeks or more given; - £ 535/person up to four people where less than 8 weeks given; - £ 161 for each additional person. C. Academic study tours - £ 266/person up to four people where 8 weeks or more given; - £ 374/person up to four people where less than 8 weeks given; - £ 133 for each additional person (Rates as from 1 April 1995; new rates with 10% increase are being considered)
CBIE(Canada)	No fees. CBIE has been managing a "United Nations Fellowship Program" on behalf of CIDA since December 1987. Fellowships must be channelled through UN and Specialised agencies.
CIES(France)	- 756 FF/person/per file and in addition - 486 FF/person/month spent in France(minimum one month payment) reduced to - 406 FF/person/month for groups of ten people or more For study tours, additional fees are charged based on time spent for arrangements required. Base fee is 2450 FF/half day of staff time
CDG(Germany)	- DM 650,- - Administration fee (applied since 1 June 1989 and considered back then by CDG as "barely adequate" to cover their costs)

81. In any case the problem of requesting or not the services of a placement agency should be dealt with in terms of cost-effectiveness, efficiency, quality control and value for money. Most organizations have registered those past few years in their fellowship units a reduction of staff which could impair their delivery: outsourcing some functions to NPSAs even on paying basis could prove more cost -effective than hiring additional staff. Other possibilities could also be explored. During the discussions in Vienna, some organizations (UNESCO, ITU) recognized that they try to avoid using NPSAs unless their services are free. IAEA has developed a new approach whereby a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is signed with a counterpart which accepts the responsibility for assisting in the placement of IAEA fellows and is paid a token fee for each successful placement. Using Internet has allowed UNESCO to identify suitable host institutions in a number of "difficult" fields of study. For their part, the NPSAs reminded participants that their role should not be confined to placement only and that they actually offer a full service including administrative functions and monitoring of fellows.

RECOMMENDATION No. 4

(a) Host governments are urged to provide or continue to provide the necessary support to their NPSAs so that they can extend free services to United Nations system- sponsored fellows; as a matter of policy, organizations should give priority to securing such free services whenever available, due regard being given to cost-effectiveness and quality control;

(b) Future SFO Meetings should investigate other possibilities for more cost-effective placements such as regrouping requests to fewer NPSAs, requesting a particular NPSA to serve as a regional placement agency, pooling of resources or establishment on a cost-sharing basis of common placement structures funded by participating organizations...etc.

(c) The Secretary General, in consultation with the Administrator of UNDP and the host country, should report to the General Assembly at its 54th session on the possibility of giving UNETPSA a new mandate to capitalise on its experience and serve as a common system placement and supervision mechanism in Southern Africa.

D. Other management issues within organizations.

82. **Centralisation or decentralisation?** Organizational structures of offices responsible for fellowships are either centralised or decentralised depending on the overall structure of the organization concerned. Organizations which have a network of regional and/or country representatives tend to be more decentralised. WHO fellowship programmes are entirely decentralised to the Regional Offices. In IAEA where there are no regional structures, the Training and Fellowships Section at headquarters is centrally responsible for all placements. In UNESCO there is an increasing tendency to have the Fellowships Section at Headquarters administer fellowships of an international character (i.e a beneficiary going from one region to another) while Field Offices administer fellowships and study grants of a regional character(i.e a beneficiary going from one county to another in the same region). General Assembly resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992 which decided that national execution should become the norm also stressed *inter alia* that "the placing of fellowships should be decentralised to the country level to the maximum effect possible to avoid delays, reflect national needs and ensure cost-effectiveness".

83. The 1976 JIU report on fellowships had recommended that "a substantial measure of responsibility should be delegated to the field" for fellowships which are a component of larger projects and that where the organization concerned did not have a regional or country representative, the services of the UNDP Resident Representative should be used. In today's context, the new Resident Coordinator system should play a similar gap-filling function for agencies which do not have decentralised operations.

84. One interesting consequence of decentralisation should be mentioned here. The evaluation of WHO fellowship programmes found out that the regional offices in Europe (EURO) and in North America (AMRO) made placements for other sending regions and had to incur additional costs for such placements . Instead of charging the full extra costs to the sending regions it was decided that the fellowship programme being a global WHO programme, all regions should contribute to its success. Consequently, host regions were only partially compensated for their extra costs.

85. **Need for improved evaluation.** Evaluation is definitely the Achilles' heel in most organizations. Where assessments of fellowship programmes have been undertaken, the conclusions are often the same:

- " Few fellows actually send termination of studies reports and fewer governments prepare utilisation reports. As a result overall evaluation reports by WHO offer interesting comments on the size, structure and cost of regional fellowship programmes but have little to say about relevance and impact;"[29]
- " It is difficult or even impossible to assess the aggregate results of fellowships and study tours or to draw general conclusions as to their effectiveness in contributing to industrial development, even within the context of the projects where most fellowships are offered".[30]

- " It is impossible to assess the overall impact of the fellowship programme in any Regional Office of UNEP, because follow-up procedures were not successfully implemented in any of the five Offices.... due partly to lack of funds" [31]

86. The External Auditor of WHO recommended therefore in 1994 that "WHO give high priority to monitoring fellowships against achievement of their objectives and evaluating their overall effectiveness". He welcomed the steps taken by the Director General to evaluate fellowships in all regions within three years. Furthermore, an "Evaluation tool for the WHO fellowship programme" [32] was designed and field tested during the period from 1994 to 1996 in close consultation with WHO fellowship officers from the regions and headquarters. The goals and the methodology for the evaluation process are designed to "allow for rapid and objective assessment of the efficiency of the WHO fellowship programme and point to areas of improvement, both through optimization of existing practices and establishment of new ones", using a set of performance indicators.

87. Lack of funds is the major argument put forward to explain the weaknesses in evaluation processes. Faced with limited resources, many organizations consider that evaluation is an expensive undertaking which does not necessarily bring value for money. They argue in particular that the duration of training is constantly being reduced due to financial constraints and as a consequence the impact of shorter studies would be more and more difficult to assess. While these arguments have some merit, it is also true that spending whatever limited funds are made available for a fellowship programme without having any reasonable indication of impact is probably a waste of much needed resources. Ideally, funds for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating fellowships should be incorporated in the budgets of projects or programmes through which the fellowships are offered. Unfortunately this does not appear to be the case in many instances, partly because the performance of fellowship services is perhaps assessed more on the basis of total outputs than on the quality or impact of delivery.

88 Recipient governments, donor institutions and fellows themselves also share part of the responsibility. Upon completion of the projects and programmes within which fellowships have been implemented, follow up measures such as monitoring the utilization of skills and knowledge gained at the individual or organizational levels must be undertaken as part of the regular functions of the government or NGOs concerned. In that regard, the role of governments is bound to increase with the move towards national execution and recipient countries will need to ensure that effective monitoring and evaluation systems are in place to support such a role.

89. WHO's experience could be shared with other interested organizations and future SFO Meetings should allocate more time to deal with the issues related to the evaluation of fellowship programmes. Consideration could be given to the possibility for two or more organizations undertaking a joint evaluation at field level.

RECOMMENDATION No. 5

(a) Organizations which have not done so should undertake an evaluation of their fellowship programme either on their own or within a joint venture with other interested organizations and report consequently to their legislative organs on ways and means to improve their overall impact, relevance and cost- effectiveness;

(b) Recipient countries are urged to contribute to the fullest extent possible to the implementation of follow up procedures which can enhance the evaluation of fellowship programmes;

(c) Within the framework of inter-agency coordination on fellowships, evaluation issues and methodologies should be emphasized through sharing of experiences and definition of best practices;

90. <u>Opportunities and challenges of the information age</u>. The revolution in information and communications technologies (ICT) has brought new opportunities in the management of fellowships. During the 1985 and 1992 SFO Meetings, the Turin Centre made presentations on its computerised fellowships management system. The computerisation of fellowship administration was also discussed at the SFO Meeting in Paris in the framework of a mutual exchange of information during which UNDDSMS provided details on its fellowship tracking programme. IAEA estimated that computerisation "had increased efficiency by some 30% and additional efficiency could be expected". FAO, WMO and UNDP confirmed that while efficiency had increased, it did not necessarily allow a reduction in staff. For its part, the British Council, one of the NPSAs which attended the meeting, informed

participants that their automated fellowships management system did permit a small reduction of staff through improved efficiency.

91. Most organizations have been under pressure for the past few years to "do more with less" and fellowship units in many cases have experienced some form of downsizing. The use of ICTs for the management of fellowships became therefore indispensable. As a consequence, selection and placement times have been reduced, data banks of training institutions have replaced paper form publications which were often outdated as soon as they came out of printing, tracking of fellows became less time consuming. With the Internet it is now possible to have not only information on countries of study but also to inquire about plane schedules and tariffs and even make bookings in some regions. UNESCO has reported that using Internet has even allowed to identify suitable host institutions in a number of "difficult" fields of study. All these opportunities can tremendously improve the management of fellowships but they do generate new challenges. Some organizations are reluctant to give free access to their data banks of training institutions by fear of being left aside when placements are made directly by nominating countries. On the other hand the development of ICTs has reinforced the recognition of a right to access information. In 1997 ACC has adopted a Statement on Universal Access to Basic Communications and Information Services.

92. Another important and emerging challenge is the development of computer based training and online training. Traditionally, training involved sending the trainee to an institution or bringing a trainer to the classroom. In both cases there was usually the need for one party to travel to the other party's location and necessary arrangements had to be made. New technologies have generated virtual classes and although they are not applicable to all fields of training, they are bound to impact on many training programmes in the future and consequently on the role of fellowship units. ITU has set up a "Virtual Training Centre" which is a training centre on the Information Highway. It offers online training complemented by more traditional training delivery mechanisms. Some universities in the USA offer online academic courses leading to degrees. Just a few years ago it was unthinkable that a computer could be part of the entitlements of a fellow. Today, some organizations recognize that in certain circumstances, such entitlement is as justified as the books allowance. Tomorrow it could prove more cost-effective to save on travel costs and stipends and instead equip a fellow with a PC and a connexion to Internet for training online. United Nations system organizations should closely monitor these developments and be prepared to adapt their training and fellowship programmes accordingly.

IV. COORDINATION ISSUES

A. Inter-agency coordination

93. **SFO Meetings**. All organizations agree that the SFO formula is a useful framework for inter-agency consultations. The 12th SFO Meeting in Vienna "took note of the achievements reached in the past through the informal coordination mechanism of the meeting of senior fellowship officers both on administrative issues(stipend rate methodology, insurance, allowances and entitlements) and on programme and operational issues(national capacity building, national execution, new modalities of fellowships)." Having noted that "fellowships and training are activities in which all parts of the UN system are involved", the Meeting also recommended that " within the ACC there should be a formal body for inter-agency consultations on fellowship and study visit programmes" and that "this body could report to the ACC through the CCPOQ Advisory Panel on Operational Activities Training". Some agencies felt that a more formal structure would lend credibility to inter-agency fellowship meetings. Although there was no formal link with the ACC machinery, reports of SFO Meetings were examined by CCPOQ for operational issues and by CCAQ for administrative issues. In establishing such a link as recommended, it is not clear whether that would entail adding another layer in the consideration of the conclusions and recommendations of future SFO Meetings.

94. Attendance to SFO Meetings need to be reviewed. As already mentioned, participation has been opened to senior fellowship officers and representatives of host countries and NPSAs but so far, with the exception of Tunisia in 1997, representatives of developing countries have not taken part. Granted that such meetings are essential for the coordination of fellowship programmes in the United Nations system, and considering the shift in placements from developed to developing countries, it would be appropriate to review the format and attendance to future SFO Meetings so that more NPSAs from developing countries are invited. To avoid the agendas of the biennial SFO Meetings being overburdened, regional off-session preparatory meetings could be held to assess the impact of the regionalisation of fellowships and take full advantage of possibilities in the context of TCDC.

95. **Inter-agency secretariat.** The need for a formal coordination machinery on fellowships was among the recommendations made in the 1976 JIU report. A Meeting of fellowship officers sponsored by ACC convened in Paris in September 1976 and as it "saw much merit in the suggestions made in the JIU report" it concluded that "... an experienced official dealing with fellowships should be designated as system-wide coordinator who would be reporting to the ACC Sub-Committee on Education and Training at regular intervals"[33]. The Meeting also stressed that "the tasks entrusted to the coordinator would entail an increase in workload and require the provision of adequate support services". The ACC endorsed the recommendation.

96. Up until now, the Chief of UNDDSMS Geneva Office and his predecessors have had the exclusive responsibility of fulfilling the coordination function on fellowships. However participants of the 12th SFO Meeting were informed that the United Nations considered now that "the role of fellowships coordination should be shared among senior officers of the agencies on a rotation basis, to reflect the actual partnerships which had developed among the participants". In the opinion of the Inspectors, sharing of responsibilities through a rotation of the host organization could lead to deficiencies for an inter-agency secretariat which is called upon to serve as focal point for a "formal body" linked to ACC. Other means can be found to ensure such a sharing of responsibilities while maintaining the continuity required for fulfilling the coordination function.

97. **Coordination on thematic issues.** While UNDP funding has dwindled for most specialised agencies, UNOPS has registered instead a steep increase in fellowship placements. The fields of training covered by UNOPS include Health, Agriculture, Finance and Trade, Management and Public Administration, Education policy, Educational planning and administration". The respective roles of the Specialised Agencies and UNOPS or its predecessors constitute an old issue. While the former claim to have a mandate in their particular fields of activities, the latter, with the support of UNDP, argues that mandate is not enough and that efficiency, cost-effectiveness and timely implementation are called for by both donors and recipient countries. This is not the place to consider the merits of the respective arguments, as a new JIU report on UNOPS is planned for submission in 1998. However, if capacity building is one of the declared objectives of United Nations system fellowship programmes, it is essential that organizations granting or administering fellowships in the same sectors reinforce their coordination whenever possible. For instance, UNESCO, UNOPS and WHO have granted fellowships to upgrade the skills of health professionals. Finance, Trade or Public Administration are covered by more than one organization in the United Nations system.

Consideration should therefore be given to having on thematic fields a lead agency with whom other participants in that field will liaise to ensure that the overall inputs from the system organizations are harmonized and without duplication. This would help to defeat the "professional fellows" who sometimes benefit from successive grants offered by different agencies. The formula of a lead agency is now a common feature of most system wide operations such as the Special Initiative on Africa.

98. Coordination at field level. During the field visits, it was found that quite often , officers from different organizations seldom knew what training and fellowship activities were undertaken by their counterparts even when most United Nations system organizations shared the same premises. The United Nations Resident Coordinator system, which has registered significant improvements over the years , should take necessary measures to ensure that United Nations system organizations with training and fellowship programmes being implemented for the benefit of the same country "move from sharing of information to harmonization and eventually integration of programmes" as suggested by one WHO field Representative.

RECOMMENDATION No. 6

(a) An inter-agency coordination mechanism on fellowship matters should be maintained and hosted by one of the participating organizations to handle focal point activities; in designating the host organization, due consideration should be given to the need for continuity and to the special responsibilities of the United Nations in coordination issues;

(b) SFO Meetings should continue to serve as the main framework for inter-agency coordination on system-wide issues relating to the management of fellowships, with adequate linkage to the ACC machinery; Participation to these Meetings and their format should better reflect the new trends in the placement of fellows ; prior to SFO Meetings, consideration should be given to the assessment of fellowshipsissues at regional level in view to take full advantage of possibilities offered for the organization of placements in the context of TCDC;

(c) Agencies which have training activities in the same fields should designate a lead agency and harmonise their programmes for better impact and to avoid duplications.

B. Coordination within organizations.

99. The implementation of a fellowship programme involves inputs from different units within an organization. The processing of requests and the time lag for actual placement and the beginning of training are of utmost importance. Faster processing of requests partly due to computerisation have contributed in IAEA to reduce the time for placement from an average of 16-18 months to about 8-10 months, thus reducing also the inventory of pending applications. As a result, whereas in October 1991, 85% of the requests were from before 1991, in October 1993, only 10% originated from before 1993.

100. Another aspect of in-house coordination relates to the respective roles of fellowship units and substantive units dealing with different types of training activities. Fellowship programmes are either part of a larger project or are a project by themselves. In both cases their intended objectives are not isolated from the overall operational activities of the executing or implementing agency. Substantive units have therefore an indirect responsibility in the output delivery of fellowship programmes. Furthermore, the delineation between "fellowships" and other training activities is not always very clear and efforts to focus human resources development programmes on capacity building can be successful only if all contributions within the organization concerned are harmonised. Such harmonisation could imply for instance that instead of granting a "fellowship" or a study tour, another type of training is considered as more appropriate. Serious consideration should be given in the framework of future SFO Meetings and eventually through reporting to IAPSO, to the possibility of including, for information purposes, data on the contribution to capacity building made by each organization under other modes of training.

ANNEX : Number of fellowships and related expenditures during 1990--1995 by organization and by source of funding

(Upperside figures: total number of fellowships; Lowerside figures: expenditures in 1000 $ except for WIPO in 1000 Swiss Francs)

Organization	Biennium 1990-1991				Biennium 1992-1993				Biennium 1994-1995*			
	UNDP (a)	RB(b)	Other (c)	Total	UNDP (a)	RB(b)	Other (c)	Total	UNDP (a)	RB(b)	Other (c)	Total
ECLAC				NA				NA	22	0	199	**221** (NA)
FAO	1,410 (23,936)	82 (824)	484 (9,835)	**1,976** (34,150)	806 (11,880)	78 (831)	335 (4,945)	**1,219** (17,656)	694 (8,494)	121 (1,075)	667 (8,317)	**1,482** (17,886)
IAEA	82 (862)	1,531 (12,175)	110 (2,876)	**1,723** (15,913)	24 (200)	1,634 (13,673)	127 (2,059)	**1,785** (15,932)	45 (483)	2,080 (17,345)	149 (2,461)	**2,274** (20,289)
ICAO	2,866 (13,385)	0	48 (502)	**2,914** (13,887)	1,327 (7,558)	0	89 (469)	**1,416** (8,027)	1,109 (5,421)	0	97 (718)	**1,206** (6,139)
ILO (Headquarter + ILO/ITC)	NA	NA	NA	**2,822*** (NA)	NA	NA	NA	**5,380** (NA)	1,021	1,121	4,172	**6,314** (NA)
IMO	88 (1,068*)	0	60 (1,456*)	**148** (2,524*)	87 (1,647)	0	25 (2,605)	**112** (4,252)	22 (422)	0	62 (3,143)	**84** (3,565)
ITU**	2,358 (7,496)	418 (NA)	96 (580)	**2,872** (NA)	1,422 (4,251)	1,045 (NA)	189 (774)	**2,656** (NA)	282 (2,436)	1,776 (NA)	489 (774)	**2,547** (NA)
UNDCP	0	0	68	**68** (282*)	0	0	133 (1,143)	**133** (1,143)	0	0	84 (653)	**84** (653)
UNDDSMS	NA	NA	NA	**9,765** (NA)	NA	NA	NA	**6,738** (NA)	NA	NA	NA	**4,536** (NA)

ANNEX : Number of fellowships and related expenditures during 1990--1995 by organization and by source of funding (continued)

(Upperside figures: total number of fellowships; Lowerside figures: expenditures in 1000 $ except for WIPO in 1000 Swiss Francs)

Organization	Biennium 1990-1991				Biennium 1992-1993				Biennium 1994-1995*			
	UNDP (a)	RB(b)	Other (c)	Total	UNDP (a)	RB(b)	Other (c)	Total	UNDP (a)	RB(b)	Other (c)	Total
UNOPS	1,490 (7,703)	0	332 (2,586)	**1,822** (10,289)	6,036 (3,939*)	0	440 (611)	**6,476** (4,550)	10,315 (5,338)	0	1,397 (1,636)	**11,712** (6, 974)
UNESCO	967 (7,109)	97 (388)	284 (1,962)	**1,348** (9,459)	784 (5,181)	93 (337)	216 (1,734)	**1,093** (7,252)	424 (1,789)	777 (2,879)	704 (2,722)	**1,905** (7,390)
UNIDO**	2,893 (NA)	92 (NA)	642 (NA)	**3,627** (40,863)				**NA**				**NA**
UPU				**NA**				**NA**	20* (NA)	0	395* (NA)	**415*** (NA)
WHO	202 (816)	4,377 (47,776)	523 (7,734)	**5,102** (56,316)	170 (649)	4,234 (39,018)	722 (6,086)	**5,126** (45,753)	107 (700)	4,394 (41,100)	731 (5,700)	**5,232** (47,500)
WIPO	247* (NA)	354* (1,344)	246* (NA)	**847*** **(NA)**	296 (NA)	899 (1,982)	753 (NA)	**1,948** (NA)	334 (NA)	1,098 (2,146)	705 (NA)	**2,137** (1,442)
WMO				**NA**				**NA**				**422*** (NA)
GRAND TOTAL				**35,034*** **(183,683*)**				**34,082*** **(104,565*)**				**37,948*** **(111,838*)**

(a) Data for UNDP's main and UNDP administered trust funds
(b) Refers to technical cooperation activities financed from the regular programme of the reporting agency
(c) Refers to technical cooperation activities of the reporting agency funded from extrabudgetary sources other than UNDP
NA Data not available
* Partial data due to the fact that some figures are unavailable or cover only one year in the biennium
** Data includes group training (ITU) or cover fellowships and training(UNIDO)

NOTES

1. Report on Fellowships in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/76/1 and A/31/01).

2. United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989, paragraph 2.

3. Ibid., paragraph 3.

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